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REGIONAL COOPERATION

Regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

SUMMARY

The present report contains resolutions and decisions adopted at the recent sessions of the regional commissions that call for action by the Economic and Social Council or are to be brought to its attention. The report covers the period between the Council's substantive sessions of 1996 and 1997. During the first half of 1997, four of the five regional commissions held their regular sessions: the Economic Commission for Europe held its fifty-second session at Geneva from 21 to 24 April; the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific held its fifty-third session at Bangkok from 23 to 30 April; the Economic Commission for Africa held the thirty-second session of the Commission and twenty-third meeting of its Conference of Ministers at Addis Ababa from 5 to 8 May, and the eighteenth meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole from 28 April to 2 May; and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia held its nineteenth session at Beirut from 5 to 8 May. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, which holds its sessions on a biennial basis, did not meet in 1997; however, its Committee of the Whole met in New York on 5 and 6 June.

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I. MATTERS CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE COUNCIL

A. Economic Commission for Europe

1. At its fifty-second session, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) adopted three decisions requiring action by the Council.

Endorsement of the Declaration on the Strengthening of Economic Cooperation in Europe and Plan of Action

2. In its decision A (50), the Commission decided to convene its fifty-second (jubilee) session in 1997 at a high level with a view to adopting a declaration on strengthening of economic cooperation in Europe which would define strategic directions of future activities of ECE. Subsequently, the Commission further decided to establish an ad hoc working group to define strategic directions of future activities of the Commission, reflecting new realities in the ECE region and taking into account the needs and priorities of economic development of the countries in transition, as well as budget capacity.

3. Pursuant to that decision, the ECE programme of work was reviewed by member countries at a very detailed level; they also carried out a thorough examination of issues of an organizational and institutional nature. The strategic directions of future ECE activities and the package of reforms resulting from that review process are contained in the Declaration on the Strengthening of Economic Cooperation in Europe (E/ECE/1346) and the Plan of Action (E/ECE/1347 and Corr.1), formally adopted at the jubilee session of the Commission.

4. Subsequently, in its decision A (52), the Commission recommended that the Economic and Social Council endorse the Declaration on the Strengthening of Economic Cooperation in Europe and the Plan of Action.

5. In compliance with that decision, it is proposed that the Economic and Social Council adopt the following decision:

DRAFT DECISION I

Declaration on the Strengthening of Economic Cooperation in Europe and Plan of Action

The Economic and Social Council, noting that on 22 April 1997 the Economic Commission for Europe adopted the Declaration on the Strengthening of Economic Cooperation in Europe[1] and the Plan of Action,[2] and taking note of Commission decision A (52), decides to endorse the Declaration and Plan of Action.

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[1] E/ECE/1346.

[2] E/ECE/1347 and Corr.1.

Endorsement of ECE Recommendation 25, "Use of the UN/EDIFACT Standard"

6. The United Nations Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport (UN/EDIFACT) is the only international standard for electronic data interchange. It is developed and maintained by technical experts from both the private and public sectors within and outside the ECE region. UN/EDIFACT is supported by a memorandum of understanding with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and has been endorsed for use by a number of important international organizations such as the World Customs Organization (WCO), the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) and the International Article Numbering Association (EAN).

7. During its September 1995 session, the ECE Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures, which was recently transformed by the Commission into the Centre for Facilitation of Procedures and Practices in Administration, Commerce and Transport (CEFACT), adopted Recommendation 25 on the use of the UN/EDIFACT Standard. The Recommendation was subsequently adopted by the Committee on the Development of Trade. At the request of the latter, the Commission, in its decision B (52), endorsed the Recommendation and recommended that the Economic and Social Council also endorse it.

8. In compliance with that decision, it is proposed that the Economic and Social Council adopt the following decision:

DRAFT DECISION II

Economic Commission for Europe Recommendation 25, "Use of the UN/EDIFACT Standard"

The Economic and Social Council, taking note of the decision of the Committee on the Development of Trade[3] and decision B (52) of the Economic Commission for Europe on the UN/EDIFACT Standard, decides to endorse Commission Recommendation 25, "Use of the UN/EDIFACT Standard"[4] as an international United Nations recommendation.

United Nations Framework Classification for Reserves/Resources: Solid Fuels and Mineral Commodities

9. An international framework classification for reserves/resources of solid fuels and mineral commodities was recently completed under the auspices of the ECE Working Party on Coal. Its purpose was to create an instrument that would permit reserves/resources to be classified on an internationally consistent and uniform basis using market economy criteria.

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[3] ECE/TRADE/210, para. 23.

[4] ECE/TRADE/207.

10. The Classification framework was endorsed by the ECE Working Party on Coal and subsequently by the ECE Committee on Energy. In addition, the elaboration of the Classification was supported by major coal and mineral-producing non-ECE countries. In total, more than 60 ECE and non-ECE countries participated in the elaboration of the Classification.

11. In its decision C (52), the Commission endorsed the decisions of the Working Party on Coal and the Committee on Energy to approve the United Nations Framework Classification for Reserves/Resources: Solid Fuels and Mineral Commodities; requested the ECE secretariat to publish the Framework Classification by November 1997 to facilitate its use by major coal and mineral industries worldwide; recommended that the Committee on Sustainable Energy monitor the application of the Framework Classification, commencing in 1997; and recommend that the Economic and Social Council consider appropriate measures for the worldwide application of the Framework Classification.

12. In view of that decision, the Economic and Social Council is invited to adopt the following decision:

DRAFT DECISION III

United Nations Framework Classification for Reserves/Resources: Solid Fuels and Mineral Commodities

The Economic and Social Council, taking note of decision C (52) of the Economic Commission for Europe and welcoming the endorsement by the Commission of the United Nations Framework Classification for Reserves/Resources: Solid Fuels and Mineral Commodities, which was elaborated in close collaboration with States not members of the Commission, decides to invite States Members of the United Nations, international organizations and the regional commissions to consider the possibility of taking appropriate measures for ensuring worldwide application of the Framework Classification.

B. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

13. At its fifty-third session, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) approved one draft resolution for adoption by the Council.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

Restructuring the conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling resolutions 143 (XXX) of 5 April 1974, 210 (XXXVI) of 29 March 1980, 262 (XLIII) of 30 April 1987, 47/3 of 10 April 1991 and 51/3 of 1 May 1995 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on the conference structure of the Commission,

Also recalling General Assembly resolution 50/11 of 2 November 1995 on multilingualism, in particular paragraphs 1, 5 and 6 thereof,

Further recalling Commission resolution 48/2 of 23 April 1992 on restructuring the conference structure of the Commission, in particular its decision to review the conference structure of the Commission, including its thematic priorities and its subsidiary structure, no later than at the fifty-third session of the Commission,

Cognizant of General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996 on further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields,

Reaffirming that the complexity of the development problems faced by the countries in the Asia and Pacific region, in particular the developing countries, increasingly demands that these problems be tackled in a comprehensive manner through interdisciplinary and intersectoral action,

Recognizing the increased responsibilities of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, which comprises a geographical area containing 62 per cent of the population of the world and includes many developing country members and associate members, among which are least developed, landlocked and island developing countries and economies in transition with special needs,

Recognizing further that the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Commission provides a historic opportunity for the Commission to bring about the wide participation of its members and associate members and to sharpen the focus of its work to enable it to respond more effectively to the evolving economic and social needs of the members and associate members within a rapidly changing global paradigm, including the changing scope of regional cooperation, by utilizing fully the multidisciplinary advantage of the Commission and its increased capability in technical assistance activities,

Noting the comparative advantage of the Commission as the most representative body for the Asia and Pacific region in carrying out its role as the main general economic and social development centre of the United Nations system for the Asia and Pacific region,

Having considered the recommendations of the Regional Preparatory Meeting on the Review of the Conference Structure of the Commission, held at Bangkok from 24 to 28 February 1997,

1. Decides to revise its conference structure, including its thematic and subsidiary structure, to conform to the following pattern:

1. The Commission

The Commission shall meet annually, each session comprising a senior officials' segment followed by a ministerial segment, for up to a maximum of seven working days to discuss and decide upon important issues concerning

economic and social development in the region, to decide upon the recommendations of its subsidiary bodies and of the Executive Secretary, to examine and approve the programme of work and priorities and to take any other decisions required, in conformity with its terms of reference.

2. Subsidiary structure

The conference structure of the Commission should consist of the following five committees, which should meet at the intervals and for the maximum duration indicated below:

Committees	Periodicity	Maximum duration
Regional Economic Cooperation	Biennial	3 days
Socio-economic Measures to Alleviate Poverty in Rural and Urban Areas	Annual	3 days
Environment and Natural Resources Development	Annual	3 days
Transport, Communications, Tourism and Infrastructure Development	Annual	3 days
Statistics	Biennial	3 days

The Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries and the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries should be retained and reinvigorated. The sessions of the Special Bodies should be held for a maximum of two days biennially, one each in alternate years, back-to-back with the annual sessions of the Commission.

In order to facilitate its work, the Committee on Regional Economic Cooperation shall have a high-level Steering Group, which will meet annually for a maximum duration of three days. The Steering Group shall set its own agenda and organize its own work procedures under the overall direction of the Committee.

3. Ad hoc ministerial conferences

(a) Subject to the approval of the Commission, ad hoc ministerial conferences on specific issues may be organized but, starting in 1998, no more than one such conference should be held per year;

(b) In those years when a ministerial conference is held to cover issues normally discussed in a corresponding committee or special body, that committee or special body shall not be convened.

4. Ad hoc intergovernmental meetings

(a) Ad hoc intergovernmental meetings may be convened, with the prior approval of the Commission, to carry out a detailed examination of substantive and priority issues, including relevant cross-sectoral issues;

(b) No more than five such intergovernmental meetings may be held during a calendar year, and the total number of days should not exceed twenty-five.

5. Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

The functions of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission shall be in accordance with the terms of reference contained in annex I to the present resolution. It shall examine ways to enhance and improve its ability to advise and assist the Executive Secretary in drawing up proposals for the medium-term plan, the programme budget, and the work programme priorities and resource allocation, consistent with the guidelines provided by the Commission, and to monitor and evaluate the implementation, outcome and effectiveness of the Commission's programme of work in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 of the terms of reference of the Advisory Committee, and to report back to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session.

6. Existing bodies under the auspices of the Commission

The following bodies under the auspices of the Commission shall continue to function as prescribed in their respective statutes and terms of reference:

(i) Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology;

(ii) Regional Coordination Centre for Research and Development of Coarse Grains, Pulses, Roots and Tuber Crops in the Humid Tropics of Asia and the Pacific;

(iii) Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.

7. General provisions

(a) Functions. The functions of the committees and special bodies are specified in their respective terms of reference in annexes II-VIII to the present resolution. Committees should select priority issues and focus on well-defined problems in order to show tangible results within specified time-frames;

(b) Rules of procedure. Unless otherwise specified by the Commission, the rules of procedure of the Commission, including those pertaining to the decision-making process, shall apply mutatis mutandis to the committees and special bodies;

(c) Informal session. An informal session among the heads of delegations during the ministerial segment of each Commission session should be organized on a year-by-year basis and should not be institutionalized. The agenda for the informal session should be decided by consensus and the annotated agenda should reach members at least thirty days before the opening of the session to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the session. Simultaneous interpretation should also be provided;

2. Invites the Executive Secretary, under the direction of the Secretary-General and in conformity with the goal of maximizing the impact of the United Nations in the field of economic and social development, to reorganize the secretariat so as to enhance its ability to service the subsidiary structure of the Commission and implement its revised programme of work under the framework of the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary to inform the Governments of members and associate members about the preliminary assessment of the organizational, staffing and financial implications of the revision of the intergovernmental structure subsidiary to the Commission within the next six months;

4. Also requests the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at subsequent sessions on the implementation of the present resolution and on the impact and effectiveness of the revised conference structure, including its thematic priorities and its subsidiary structure;

5. Further requests the Executive Secretary to inform members and associate members, through the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, of the progress made by the Commission towards the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996;

6. Commends the secretariat on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions establishing language arrangements for the official working languages of the Commission, and urges the Executive Secretary to continue his efforts to monitor closely the strict implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/11;

7. Decides to review the conference structure of the Commission, including its thematic priorities and its subsidiary structure, no later than at its substantive session of 2002.

Annex I

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES DESIGNATED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

The Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission shall have the following functions:

1. To maintain close cooperation and consultation between the members and the secretariat of the Commission.

2. To advise and assist the Executive Secretary in drawing up proposals for the medium-term plan, programme budget and priorities, consistent with the guidelines provided by the Commission.

3. To receive, on a regular basis, information on the administrative and financial functioning of the Commission and to assist and advise the Executive Secretary in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Commission's programme of work.

4. To review the draft calendar of meetings prior to its submission to the Commission.

5. To exchange views with the Executive Secretary on the provisional agenda for each session of the Commission, bearing in mind chapter II of its rules of procedure.

6. To assist the secretariat in the formulation of the annotated provisional agenda for each session of the Commission before it is finalized.

7. To monitor the functioning of the thematic approach and the implementation of activities under it in order to provide an assessment of the thematic approach and to suggest to the Commission, at the appropriate time, potential modifications to or changes of the themes.

8. To carry out any other tasks to be entrusted to it by the Commission.

Annex II

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

The economic growth process in the Asia and Pacific region is characterized by increasing interdependence of its economies leading to a growing trend towards regional economic cooperation. The potential for enhanced cooperation will be realized more fully through the promotion and expansion of intraregional and inter-subregional trade and investment flows, technology development and transfer, and industrial production linkages, all of which are strongly encouraged by the diversity and increasing complementarity of the region's economies. There is, in addition, the imperative of such enhanced regional economic cooperation for spreading the growth impulse more widely across the region and mainstreaming the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries as well as economies in transition.

Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Committee would:

1. Review and analyse global and regional trends and developments that have an impact on areas such as intraregional trade, investment, technology and

financial flows, enterprise development, trade efficiency, information technology, industrial restructuring and relocation, and technological development and transfer.

2. Serve as a mobilizer of ideas and a catalyst for action to promote regional economic cooperation by identifying and addressing major development issues and regional concerns and priorities in trade, investment, financial, information technology, industrial and technological areas, and recommend policy options and measures to achieve tangible results and enhance national capacities to meet new challenges.

3. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as special concerns of the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries and economies in transition, the environment, human resources development and women in development are adequately addressed.

4. Strengthen the cooperative relationship with relevant subregional organizations to promote intra-subregional and inter-subregional cooperation and linkages through the interchange of information and experiences and, in response to articulated needs, through the promotion of growth triangles and quadrangles or other special mechanisms and arrangements.

5. Accelerate follow-up to the decisions and recommendations of global conferences relevant to the work of the Committee, at the national, subregional and regional levels; and evaluate progress and provide guidance on the implementation of regional action programmes.

6. Promote liaison with development agencies and financial institutions, private sector organizations, non-governmental organizations, and donor countries, within and outside the region, in its initiatives and activities to promote regional economic cooperation.

7. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthening cooperation with other organizations and other bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.

8. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.

9. Carry out such other activities as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to regional economic cooperation.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Committee should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Committee should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Committee shall be composed of all members and associate members of the Commission.

The Committee shall meet biennially and its report will be submitted as a background document to facilitate discussion on regional economic cooperation at the Commission sessions.

The Committee shall have a high-level Steering Group to develop innovative approaches and facilitate exchange of views on pre-selected issues of current interest, among a cross-section of representatives of government, academia and the private sector, in order to have in-depth discussion on a range of options on regional economic cooperation and make specific recommendations. Its membership shall be drawn from members and associate members on a voluntary basis. Subject to the approval of members and associate members by consensus, representatives of development agencies, financial institutions, private sector organizations and non-governmental organizations may be invited to meetings of the Steering Group to fulfil its role as a "think tank".

The Steering Group shall meet annually and its report shall be submitted to the Committee. In the years the Committee does not meet, issues discussed and recommendations made by the Steering Group could also be submitted directly to the Commission for its consideration.

Annex III

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE POVERTY IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

Poverty remains a most important issue in developing countries of the Asia and Pacific region, which must be addressed in a holistic and integrated manner. Hence, poverty alleviation is a major focus of assistance to countries in their attempts to achieve economic growth and improve the quality of life in the context of sustainable development and the emerging global economy. The Committee on Socio-economic Measures to Alleviate Poverty in Rural and Urban Areas would therefore serve as a regional forum for the identification of social and economic development issues directly related to the alleviation of poverty, and the development of appropriate strategies and policies to improve the quality of life of the poor.

Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Committee would:

1. Review and analyse the global and regional trends and developments that have an impact on the poverty situation in the region, with a focus on their correlates in both the rural and urban contexts, and recommend development policy options and programme strategies.

2. Serve as a mobilizer of ideas and a catalyst for action in undertaking measures aimed at alleviating poverty in both rural and urban areas through the promotion of people's participation, including that of women and socially and economically disadvantaged groups, and capacity-building of national and local

institutions and communities as well as human resources development and other means. Specifically, the Committee will recommend policy options and identify programmes that would address population issues and concerns; social development issues and concerns; human resources development; women in development; increased access to employment, education, health, shelter and credit; agricultural growth, especially through environmentally friendly inputs; the use of appropriate technologies; devolution of authority and participatory urban management and governance.

3. Accelerate follow-up to the decisions and recommendations of global conferences at the national, subregional and regional levels; monitor and evaluate progress in their implementation and provide guidance on the implementation of the regional action programmes relevant to the work of the Committee, inter alia, on population, social development, human resources development, rural development, women and urbanization.

4. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as special concerns of the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries and economies in transition, the environment, human resources development and women in development are adequately addressed.

5. Promote liaison with development agencies and financial institutions, private sector organizations, non-governmental organizations, and donor countries, within and outside the region, in its efforts and initiatives to deal with the issues of poverty alleviation in both rural and urban areas.

6. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.

7. Carry out such other activities as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to poverty alleviation.

8. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthening cooperation with other organizations and other bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Committee should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Committee should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Committee shall meet annually, focusing on a limited number of pre-selected issues, and shall report to the Commission.

Annex IV

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

The main objectives of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Development will be to promote regional and subregional cooperation for sustainable development and to strengthen national capacities in the field of the environment, including integration of environmental concerns into development strategies, in line with the provisions of Agenda 21 and other subsequent decisions; development and management of natural resources, including water, mineral and energy resources (excluding infrastructural aspects of electric power); diffusion and management of environmentally sound technologies; space technology applications; and natural disaster reduction.

Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Committee shall perform the following specific functions:

1. Review and assess the state of the environment in the region and, where a regional perspective on the issues provides a clear advantage, highlight the major environmental concerns with a view to encouraging the integration of environmental concerns into development policies, strategies, plans and programmes of members and associate members, at both the macroeconomic and sectoral levels.

2. Review and identify priority issues, assess progress, and promote regional and subregional cooperation in the development and management of water, mineral and energy resources and in the application of space technologies, keeping in view the need for ensuring sustainable development; and make recommendations on policies, strategies, methods and techniques for the proper investigation, development, utilization and management of those resources.

3. Promote regional and subregional cooperation in environmental protection and natural disaster reduction, and encourage members and associate members to undertake their assessment of risks from natural hazards and to integrate the outcomes of such assessments into their development plans.

4. Promote opportunities for and provide guidance on the transfer and adoption of environmentally sound technologies and their diffusion, as well as on management and operational practices to contribute to the strengthening of national capacities in achieving sustainable development.

5. Encourage the setting of standards and the strengthening of legal frameworks for the development and management of natural resources, and promote the application of environmental safeguards in manufacturing and product development.

6. Review the salient issues in the regional strategies and action programmes emerging from recent global conferences, international conventions and agreements; monitor the implementation of Agenda 21 at the regional level;

and articulate the region's response to relevant global initiatives, ensuring that such initiatives support the development of the region.

7. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as special concerns of the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries and economies in transition, human resources development and women in development are adequately addressed.

8. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthen cooperation with other organizations and other bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.

9. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.

10. Carry out such other activities as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to the environment and natural resources development.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Committee should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Committee should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Committee shall meet annually, focusing on a limited number of pre-selected areas on a rotating basis, and shall report to the Commission.

Annex V

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATIONS, TOURISM AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

The rapid growth in regional economies, trade and tourism is placing considerable strain on infrastructure facilities and services. It is also highlighting the importance of intraregional and interregional transport linkages as well as appropriate facilitation measures to ensure efficient utilization of regional linkages.

In the context of these developments, the Committee will address the following areas: roads, railways, urban transport, ports, shipping, inland waterways, dredging, multimodal transport (including freight forwarding), tourism and the infrastructural aspects of electric power.

Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Committee would:

1. Review and analyse global and regional trends and developments that have an impact on transport, communications, tourism and infrastructure development in the Asia and Pacific region.

2. Serve as a mobilizer of ideas and a catalyst for action in the transport, communications, tourism and infrastructure development sectors; recommend policy options to achieve tangible results in improving the efficient provision, management, operation, maintenance and pricing of transport, tourism facilities, infrastructure and services, taking into account equity, safety and environmental considerations; promote intraregional and interregional transport linkages, in particular the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway, services, facilitation measures and tourism; and enhance national capacities.

3. Accelerate follow-up to the decisions and recommendations of global conferences at the national, subregional and regional levels; evaluate progress and provide guidance on the implementation of the New Delhi Action Plan on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific being coordinated by the Commission. In this connection, aspects of work on civil aviation, telecommunications and postal services carried out by the specialized agencies in relation to the implementation of the Action Plan would also be addressed by the Committee.

4. Promote liaison with international financing institutions, concerned private sector organizations and non-governmental organizations to assist in the development of transport, communications, tourism and electric power infrastructure and services.

5. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat, and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as the special concerns of the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries and economies in transition, the environment, human resources development, socially and economically disadvantaged groups and women in development are adequately addressed.

6. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.

7. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthening cooperation with other organizations and other bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.

8. Carry out such other activities as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to transport, communications, tourism and infrastructure development.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Committee should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Committee should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Committee shall meet annually, focusing on specific pre-selected sectors, and present its report to the Commission as a background document to facilitate discussion.

Annex VI

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON STATISTICS

The Committee on Statistics, in acting as the focus of regional statistical development, shall perform the following functions:

1. Review and analyse progress in the development of statistics in the region.

2. Assist in the strengthening of the statistical infrastructure in the countries of the region, promote the improvement of the quality of statistics, the international comparability of data and the appropriate application of new techniques, provide guidance in meeting emerging data requirements, and arrange for the exchange of information on and experiences in statistical work and methods among the countries.

3. Promote observance of the fundamental principles of official statistics adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its special session in 1994.

4. Participate actively in the initiation, development, revision, testing and implementation of international statistical standards, promote and monitor their application, and promote their adaptation, as appropriate, to the conditions and needs of the countries of the region.

5. Play the focal role in promoting close coordination of all aspects of the statistical activities of specialized agencies, relevant United Nations bodies and other international organizations in regard to their work in the Asia and Pacific region, inter alia so as to achieve greater uniformity in concepts and definitions, reduce to a minimum the response burden on national statistical offices, and maximize the effectiveness of technical cooperation activities.

6. Promote the generation and analysis of statistical data and encourage, with due regard to relevant international work, efforts to develop a set of standardized statistical indicators for the region relevant to the programme of work of the Commission.

7. Recommend programmes of technical assistance, training, education and research in the various fields of statistics and their application.

8. Review and analyse progress in the development of information technology applications and information resource management in the region, especially in the public sector, and make recommendations on issues concerning policies and strategies, as well as on programmes of technical assistance, training and research in this field.

9. Review and evaluate the activities of the secretariat and the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work in the areas of statistics and computerized information processing, provide guidance on the work of the secretariat, and make recommendations to the Commission about the future programme of work, paying due regard to the recommendations of the United Nations Statistical Commission and other relevant bodies.

10. Make recommendations to the Governing Board of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on the nature of and priorities in statistical training for the countries of the region.

11. Inform the United Nations Statistical Commission and, where appropriate, the statistical authorities of the specialized agencies and other relevant bodies, of its work, so that due attention may be given to the wider aspects of the issues considered by the Committee.

12. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, coordinate activities with them, and ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as the special concerns of the least developed, landlocked, Pacific island developing countries and economies in transition, the environment, human resources development and women in development are adequately addressed.

13. Carry out such other activities as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to statistics.

Within the context of the above terms of reference, the Committee shall identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Committee should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Committee shall meet once every two years and shall report to the Commission.

Annex VII

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SPECIAL BODY ON LEAST DEVELOPED AND LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The special problems and constraints on the economic and social development of the least developed and landlocked developing countries have been recognized by the international community, and also within the context of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade and other international declarations. These constraints require focused priority attention in the Asia and Pacific region in order to mainstream them into the ongoing regional integration process and to associate them with the economic and social dynamism of the region. The Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries provides a focused forum for addressing the

special issues and problems facing these groups of countries in the spirit of regional cooperation.

Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Special Body will:

1. Review and analyse the economic and social progress in the least developed and landlocked developing countries and undertake in-depth reviews of economic, social and environmental constraints on the development of least developed and landlocked developing countries.

2. Serve as a mobilizer of ideas and a catalyst for action to identify and promote new policy options at the national, subregional and regional levels for the removal of constraints on the economic and social development efforts of these countries, with emphasis on the adoption of measures for increased mobilization of domestic and foreign resources, trade and private sector development, public sector reform, and provision of economic advice, on request, to Governments with limited internal capacity.

3. Assist in enhancing national capacities in least developed and landlocked developing countries, inter alia in relation to the formulation of development strategies at the national and sectoral levels.

4. Foster and strengthen intercountry cooperation arrangements for exchanges of experience and technical cooperation between and among the least developed and landlocked countries and with other developing and developed countries in the region.

5. Without duplicating work done elsewhere, review and analyse the special transit trade and transport problems of Asian landlocked developing countries, recommend suitable measures for solving these problems in accordance with international legal instruments, in particular article 125 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and encourage the Asian landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours to deal with problems within the context of bilateral cooperation.

6. Promote liaison with development agencies and financial institutions, private sector organizations, non-governmental organizations and donor countries within and outside the region, in its initiatives and activities for the benefit of the least developed and landlocked developing countries.

7. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process, ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as the environment, human resources development and women in development are adequately addressed.

8. Accelerate follow-up to the decisions and recommendations of global conferences on the least developed countries at the national, subregional and regional levels, in particular the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s and any successor programme.

9. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthening cooperation with other organizations and other bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.

10. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.

11. Carry out such other functions as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to least developed and landlocked developing countries.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Special Body should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Special Body should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Special Body shall meet biennially for two days, back-to-back with the Commission sessions, in alternate years with the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries.

Annex VIII

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SPECIAL BODY ON PACIFIC ISLAND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The special problems and constraints on the economic and social development of the Pacific island developing countries related to their isolation, small size and vulnerability to environmental hazards have been recognized by the international community, and also within the context of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and other international declarations. These constraints require focused priority attention in order to mainstream them into the ongoing regional integration process and to associate them with the economic and social dynamism of the region. The Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries provides a focused forum for addressing the special issues and problems facing this group of countries in the spirit of regional cooperation.

Under the overall supervision of the Commission, the Special Body will:

1. Review and analyse the economic and social progress in the Pacific island developing countries and undertake in-depth reviews of economic, social and environmental constraints on their development.

2. Serve as a mobilizer of ideas and a catalyst for action to identify and promote new policy options at the national, subregional and regional levels for the removal of constraints on the economic and social development efforts of these countries.

3. Assist in enhancing national capacities of Pacific island developing countries, including in relation to the formulation of development strategies at the national and sectoral levels.

4. Foster and strengthen intercountry and inter-subregional cooperation arrangements for exchanges of experience and technical cooperation between and among the Pacific island developing countries and with other developing and developed countries in the region.

5. Promote liaison, particularly through the Pacific Operations Centre of the Commission, with development agencies and financial institutions, private sector organizations, non-governmental organizations and donor countries within and outside the region, in its initiatives and activities for the benefit of the Pacific island developing countries.

6. Review the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work of the secretariat and make recommendations to the Commission about future programmes of work, and in this process, ensure that cross-sectoral issues such as the environment, human resources development and women in development are adequately addressed.

7. Accelerate follow-up to the decisions and recommendations of global conferences on small island developing countries at the national, subregional and regional levels, in particular the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

8. Promote liaison with relevant agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to minimizing overlapping and duplication, and strengthening cooperation with other organizations and bodies at the subregional, regional and global levels to maximize the effectiveness and impact of the Commission's activities.

9. Work closely with other subsidiary organs of the Commission and coordinate its activities with them.

10. Carry out such other functions as the Commission may direct from time to time in matters relating to Pacific island developing countries.

Within the context of its terms of reference, the Special Body should identify the tasks to be undertaken during a specified period. The Special Body should indicate the outcomes expected from each task, set a time-frame for the achievement of each task and monitor its implementation and effectiveness.

The Special Body shall meet for two days biennially, back-to-back with the annual sessions of the Commission, in alternate years with the Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries.

C. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

14. On 26 July 1996, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 1996/41 regarding the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/227 of

24 May 1996. The overall concern of both resolutions is the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.

15. Both bodies called for a review of the regional commissions, with a view to strengthening and enhancing their effectiveness as action- and policy-oriented bodies. The Economic and Social Council further requested the regional commissions to continue undertaking their own reviews, as called for in General Assembly resolution 50/227, and to report to the Council at its substantive session of 1997.

16. In compliance with the Council's request, the outcome of the major reforms adopted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) during the past 18 months, as well as an assessment of the progress achieved and further steps that could be taken were reviewed by the ad hoc working group created by the Commission during its twenty-sixth session and the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC.

17. The Committee of the Whole, which met in New York on 5 and 6 June 1997, adopted the following resolution, which requires action by the Council.

RESOLUTION

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
in the context of reform of the United Nations

The Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,

Recalling Commission resolution 553 (XXVI) on reform of the United Nations and its impact on ECLAC and, in particular, its decision to establish an ad hoc working group open to all ECLAC member countries, which group was empowered, inter alia, to recommend to the Commission strategic directions for its future activities in the context of the ongoing process of reform of the United Nations,

Taking note of the discussions at the 2nd meeting of the ad hoc working group established pursuant to Commission resolution 553 (XXVI), held in New York on 5 June 1997,

Bearing in mind Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/41 and General Assembly resolution 50/227, which refer to the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields and call for a review of the regional commissions, with a view to strengthening and enhancing their effectiveness as action- and policy-oriented bodies,

Bearing in mind also the request of the Economic and Social Council, that the regional commissions should continue undertaking their own assessments, as called for in General Assembly resolution 50/227, and report to the Council at its substantive session of 1997,

Having before it the notes by the secretariat entitled "Review of recent reforms adopted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean" and "Management pilot scheme",[5]

Reaffirming that the initiative on the pilot management scheme presented by the ECLAC secretariat is aimed at strengthening the role of the organization as a centre of excellence charged with collaborating with member States in a comprehensive analysis of development processes geared to the design, monitoring and evaluation of public policies and the resulting provision of operational services in the fields of specialized information, advisory services, training and support for regional and international cooperation and coordination,

Convinced that it is essential for the United Nations, in carrying out activities in the economic, social and related fields, to take account of the regional dimension and the decentralization of tasks in accordance with the comparative advantages of its subsidiary bodies located in the developing regions,

1. Notes with satisfaction the progress made by the secretariat in fulfilling the instructions of the Commission, as expressed in its resolution 553 (XXVI), particularly with regard to institutional matters and management improvement and the coordination of activities with other organizations, in order to maintain its validity and relevance in the face of evolving circumstances that affect not only Latin American and Caribbean development, but also the United Nations;

2. Further notes with satisfaction the work carried out by the ad hoc working group established pursuant to Commission resolution 553 (XXVI) in defining priorities for all elements of the ECLAC work programme for the 1998-1999 biennium and progress achieved in formulating additional strategic directions;

3. Urges the ad hoc working group, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, to ensure that, notwithstanding the changing internal and external circumstances affecting the implementation of the work programme, the activities carried out by the secretariat are based on the priorities established and the guidelines contained in the progress report of the ad hoc working group established pursuant to Commission resolution 553 (XXVI);

4. Supports the general thrust of the management pilot scheme described in document LC/G.1964, which will be developed and described in detail, in order to be submitted for consideration and approval by member countries of the Commission before its implementation, taking into account the statements made by the members of the ad hoc working group during its 2nd meeting, held in New York on 5 June 1997;

5. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to keep members informed during the implementation phase of the management pilot scheme, through

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[5] LC/G.1962 (15 April 1997) and LC/G.1964 (21 April 1997), respectively.

the ad hoc working group, with the aim of monitoring its effectiveness and impact on the work of the Commission;

6. Concurs with the general thrust of the secretariat's strategic proposal on deployment of human resources contained in the document on reform measures, with a view to generating, while ensuring the optimum utilization of expertise available within the Commission and the United Nations system, more effective results, in accordance with the needs and requirements of the countries, for a given amount of resources by adequately altering the mix of in-house staff and outsourced expertise and services, and welcomes further consultation between the secretariat and member States on the details of such a plan prior to implementation;

7. Recommends that, as reform of the United Nations proceeds in the economic, social and related areas, a clear division of responsibilities should be established with regard to regional activities in Latin America and the Caribbean between the Commission, on the one hand, and programmes, agencies and funds from the United Nations system and regional intergovernmental organizations, on the other, with a view to achieving appropriate coordination and mutual reinforcement in their respective activities;

8. Requests the Executive Secretary of ECLAC to continue to intensify, in the general context of the reform process of the United Nations in the economic, social and related areas, reform measures referred to in the present resolution and in Commission resolution 553 (XXVI) and to report thereon to the Commission at its next session, to be held in Aruba in April 1998.

D. Economic Commission for Africa

18. At the thirty-second session of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and twenty-third meeting of its Conference of Ministers, held at Addis Ababa from 5 to 8 May 1997, the Conference of Ministers of ECA approved two draft resolutions for adoption by the Council.

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Reform of the intergovernmental machinery of the Economic Commission for Africa

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the various resolutions that have implications for the mandate and operations of the Economic Commission for Africa, in particular, General Assembly resolutions 32/197 of 20 December 1977 and 33/202 of 29 January 1979 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system and Assembly resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989,

Recalling also resolution 618 (XXII) of 24 April 1987 of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa on the in-depth study of the

United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social fields,

Recalling further General Assembly resolutions 45/177 of 19 December 1990, 45/264 of 13 May 1991, 46/235 of 13 April 1992 and 50/227 of 24 May 1996 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, by which the regional commissions should be enabled fully to play their role under the authority of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council,

Bearing in mind resolution 809 (XXXI) of 8 May 1996 of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa on the new strategic directions for the Commission,

Having taken note of the new policy and programme orientation of the Commission as well as the steps being taken to restructure the secretariat, and conscious of the need to align the intergovernmental machinery to this new orientation in order to enable the Commission to address the emerging challenges and priorities of the region effectively,

Having reviewed the existing intergovernmental machinery of the Commission,

Decides that the structure and functioning of the intergovernmental machinery of the Commission should be as follows:

A. Organs dealing with overall development issues

1. Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning (the Commission) and the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole

The Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning (the Commission) will provide legislative mandates and policy guidance for the work of the Commission; consider and endorse the work programmes of the Commission; serve as a forum for articulating Africa's position on development issues on the agenda of the United Nations; and decide upon the recommendations of its subsidiary bodies and of the Executive Secretary.

Since the mandate of the Conference encompasses the whole spectrum of development issues - economic as well as social - it will assume the legislative responsibilities previously assigned to the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Human Development, which will be abolished.

The Conference will meet biennially. Its next session will be held in 1999. The Bureau of the Commission will be expanded, so that it will have a representative from each of the five subregions of the continent - North, East, Southern, West and Central Africa. It will consist of a chairman, three vice-chairmen and one rapporteur.

A Follow-up Committee is hereby established. It will be composed of the members of the incoming and outgoing bureaux of the Commission. It will meet as often as necessary but at least once in inter-sessional years to review Commission affairs and progress in the implementation of decisions.

The meetings of the Follow-up Committee will be convened by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the Chairman of the Commission as and when necessary.

The Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole will continue to provide technical support to the Conference and will meet before each session of the Conference.

2. Intergovernmental Committees of Experts of the Subregional Development Centres

The five Intergovernmental Committees of Experts of the Subregional Development Centres will meet annually and report to the Commission through the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole. In the years when the Commission does not meet, the reports of the Committees will be presented to the Follow-up Committee of the Bureau. The Committees will oversee the overall formulation and implementation of the programme of work and priorities of the Subregional Development Centres and make recommendations on important issues concerning economic and social development in their respective subregions, as well as on the promotion and strengthening of subregional economic cooperation and integration.

3. Conference of African Ministers of Finance

The Conference of African Ministers of Finance will be retained. It will be convened biennially in alternate years to the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning (the Commission). The Conference will have a committee of experts to prepare for its meetings, which will be convened before each session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance.

B. Subsidiary bodies to be created or retained

1. Committee on Women and Development

The Africa Regional Coordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development, which will be renamed "Committee on Women and Development", will be retained and will continue to play its role as an advisory forum of experts and policy makers, providing guidance to the Commission in its work on the advancement of women. It will also provide a platform for advocacy and assessing follow-up and implementation by African Governments of the global and regional platforms for action for the advancement of women. In particular, it will address issues relating to the economic empowerment of women, the

protection of their legal and human rights and improved access to education and health. It will meet biennially.

2. Committee on Development Information

As the Economic Commission for Africa strengthens its role in assisting member States in developing their national information and communication infrastructure, it needs a body that brings together experts and policy makers to advise it in this area. The beginnings of such a body exist in the high-level working group that helped to articulate the African Information Society Initiative, an action framework to build Africa's information and communication infrastructure, and in the African Technical Advisory Committee of Experts on Information Infrastructure, which was established to provide advice on the implementation of the Initiative. The Committee on Development Information will build on the work of these bodies as well as of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians, Population and Information Specialists.

The Committee on Development Information will include experts from such fields as planning, statistics and geographical information systems as well as information specialists. The Committee will meet biennially.

3. Committee on Sustainable Development

The Committee on Sustainable Development will serve as a forum of experts that will provide advice to the Commission in the interlinked areas of food security, population, environment and human settlements. It will provide a platform for advocacy and the assessment of follow-up activities by African Governments to regional and global plans of actions, namely the African Common Position on Environment and Development, the African Common Position for Habitat II, the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population, Family and Sustainable Development, Agenda 21, the Habitat Agenda, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the World Food Summit Plan of Action and their implementation.

It will address specific measures to promote the protection and regeneration of the environment, enhance food security in Africa, promote sustainable human settlements and deal with issues arising from increased population growth. The Committee will meet biennially.

4. Committee on Human Development and Civil Society

The mission of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society will be to help strengthen civil society and human development. It will enable the Commission to draw on the opinions of experts in the public and private sectors and civil society. The Committee will conduct development and follow-up activities pertaining to global and regional action programmes such as the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation. It will review major trends

and issues of regional interest regarding human development and civil society. It will assume the functions of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Fifteen of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Human Development and will meet biennially.

5. Committee on Industry and Private Sector Development

The Committee on Industry and Private Sector Development will serve as a forum for addressing measures to strengthen the private sector. It will focus on such issues as improving public-private partnerships, stimulating private investment, and creating a sound legal and regulatory framework for business. The Committee will monitor and review progress in the industrialization of Africa and will identify and recommend measures for accelerating the process of industrialization in the region.

The Committee will assume some of the functions of the Conference of African Ministers of Industry. It will provide policy and strategy guidance for enhancing programme formulation in pursuit of various aspects of subregional and regional industrial development. It will also advise on strategies to facilitate Africa's industrial competitiveness through the promotion of complementarity and integration, taking into account global scientific and technological developments. It will be composed of experts representing each private sector group, such as chambers of commerce, manufacturers' associations, capital market forums, labour, and policy makers from relevant government departments. The Committee will meet biennially.

6. Committee on Natural Resources and Science and Technology

The Committee on Natural Resources and Science and Technology will assume the functions performed by the African Regional Conference on Science and Technology and the Conference of African Ministers responsible for the Development and Utilization of Mineral Resources and Energy. It will, however, be composed of experts in these fields.

The Committee will serve as a forum for the promotion of cooperation among African countries in the areas of science and technology and development and natural resources and for providing advice on science and technology issues relevant to the development of member States. It will meet biennially.

7. Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration

The Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration will assume some of the functions of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade and Regional Cooperation and Integration. Because of the important role trade plays in regional cooperation and integration, the main focus of this work will be trade - intra-African and international trade. The Committee will be composed of experts in the field of international trade and integration drawn from government as well as the private sector.

In addition, the Committee will promote the implementation of measures designed to strengthen economic cooperation and integration among African countries; assist African countries and their intergovernmental organizations in making the policy instruments for economic cooperation and integration of the African region more effective; and identify measures to coordinate and harmonize micro- and macroeconomic policies among African countries as a prerequisite for accelerating regional economic integration. It will meet biennially.

C. Conferences proposed for abolition

1. Conference of African Ministers responsible for Human Development

The Conference of African Ministers responsible for Human Development is abolished. Its legislative functions will be assumed by the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning. The functions of its Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Fifteen will be subsumed by the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society.

2. Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment

The Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment (CAMSDE) was created in 1993, when the intergovernmental machinery of the Commission was restructured, with a view to providing legislative guidance for the Commission's work in the area of sustainable development and environment. Subsequently, it was found that its mandate duplicated that of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), which has a joint secretariat composed of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Environment Programme. Consequently, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa was requested to undertake consultations on how to resolve the problem of duplication. The results of those consultations were presented to the Conference of Ministers of the Commission in May 1996. The abolition of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Sustainable Development and Environment resolves the problem of duplication with the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.

3. Conference of African Ministers of Trade and Regional Cooperation and Integration

This Conference is abolished to eliminate overlap with both the Economic and Social Commission of the African Economic Community and its Committee on Trade, Customs and Immigration. Some of the functions of this Conference will be assumed by the newly established Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration.

4. Conference of African Ministers of Transport and Communications

This Conference will be abolished at the end of the Second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa in 1999. Thereafter, the African Economic Community's Committee on Transport, Communications and Tourism will become the regional forum for discussions on the relevant issues.

5. Conference of African Ministers of Industry

This Conference will be abolished at the end of the United Nations Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa in 2001. Thereafter, the African Economic Community's Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, Energy, Natural Resources and Environment will become the regional forum for discussions. The newly established Committee on Industry and Private Sector Development will also focus on industry in the broader context of private sector development.

D. Subsidiary bodies proposed for abolition

1. United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Africa

The functions of this Conference will be assumed by the Committee on Development Information.

2. African Regional Conference on Science and Technology

The functions of this Conference will be assumed by the Committee on Natural Resources and Science and Technology.

3. Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians, Population and Information Specialists

The functions of this Conference will be assumed by both the Committee on Sustainable Development and the Committee on Development Information.

E. Sectoral ministerial meetings

Although several sectoral ministerial meetings are proposed for abolition, the Commission will convene ministerial meetings on any issue as necessary.

Annex I

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ORGANS OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA DEALING WITH OVERALL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

1. Terms of reference of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning

The Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning shall have the following functions:

(a) Provide legislative mandates and policy guidance for the work of the Commission;

(b) Consider the programme of work and priorities of the Commission;

(c) Review and analyse the economic and social situation in the region;

(d) Identify and highlight the major economic and social development issues and concerns with a view to promoting policies and strategies for Africa's accelerated development;

(e) Suggest policy measures and actions for implementing various strategies and initiatives, including eliciting the support of the international community in support of that effort;

(f) Undertake periodic reviews of the follow-up to global conferences preparatory to the review and appraisal of the implementation of the relevant programmes of action of these conferences by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly;

(g) Conduct periodic reviews of the situation of the least developed countries and submit to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, or any special conference, a report on the situation of the least developed countries in Africa;

(h) Encourage the establishment of appropriate mechanisms at the national, subregional and regional levels to promote the advancement of women;

(i) In close collaboration with the Organization of African Unity and the African Development Bank, assist member States in promoting regional cooperation and integration, in particular in the implementation of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community;

(j) Foster policy coordination with the Organization of African Unity/ African Economic Community on all international economic negotiations;

(k) Undertake a review of the work and the functioning of the subsidiary organs of the Commission;

(l) Review and assess the programme orientation of the secretariat and any recommendations submitted by the Executive Secretary.

2. Terms of reference of the Intergovernmental Committees of Experts of the Subregional Development Centres

The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the Subregional Development Centres shall have the following functions:

(a) Recommend strategies, policies, programmes and projects aimed at enhancing economic cooperation and integration within their respective subregions and with other African subregions, in conformity with the objectives of the African Economic Community;

(b) Submit to the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa the (biennial) draft work programmes of the Subregional Development Centres and suggest measures for the successful implementation of those work programmes. The latter should take into account the activities of the intergovernmental organizations with a view to supporting, not duplicating, them;

(c) Monitor through a continuous process and an appropriate mechanism the implementation of the approved work programmes of the Subregional Development Centres and report thereon to the Conference of Ministers of the Commission; in this regard, the Committees will consider the reports of the Follow-up Committees of the Subregional Development Centres;

(d) Review and analyse the economic and social conditions prevailing in their respective subregions with a view to making appropriate recommendations for measures likely to foster economic cooperation and integration among the countries concerned;

(e) Review and make subsequent recommendations on reports of sectoral meetings organized by or with the assistance of the Subregional Development Centres;

(f) Suggest measures aimed at mobilizing resources for the effective implementation of the programmes of the Subregional Development Centres;

(g) Carry out any duties assigned to them by the Conference of Ministers of the Commission in connection with their mandate;

(h) Establish liaison with other agencies, organizations and non-governmental organizations at the subregional, regional and global levels, and take into account their relevant recommendations;

(i) Make recommendations to the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning.

3. Terms of reference of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance

The Conference of African Ministers of Finance shall have the following functions:

(a) Monitor and evaluate the impact of the international monetary and financial situation on the African economies and propose appropriate remedial action;

(b) Regularly assess the structure and magnitude of Africa's external debts, including the debt-servicing obligations of African countries, with a view to proposing effective measures to alleviate such debts;

(c) Review intra-African monetary and financial cooperation and suggest ways by which resource flows to Africa can be enhanced;

(d) Promote the exchange of information and the sharing of national experiences in dealing with monetary and financial matters;

(e) Devise strategies for strengthening Africa's position in international negotiations on monetary and financial issues.

Annex II

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

1. Committee on Women and Development

The Committee on Women and Development shall have the following functions:

(a) Review periodically progress in the implementation of the global and regional platforms for action;

(b) Review and evaluate the activities carried out in the region in the framework of the relevant programmes for the advancement of women;

(c) Harmonize and coordinate the subregional programmes on women in development approved within the subregions;

(d) Report to the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning (the Commission) on the activities and programmes on women in development covered at the subregional and regional levels;

(e) Mobilize resources for the implementation of the programmes of action agreed at the subregional and regional levels;

(f) Participate in the activities and meetings of the United Nations and other relevant bodies;

(g) Organize the exchange of information and experiences on policies regarding the advancement of women in member States.

2. Committee on Development Information

The Committee on Development Information shall have the following functions:

(a) Review and advise on the implementation of the African Information Society Initiative, an action framework for national information and communications infrastructure, with a view to suggesting measures to accelerate its implementation;

(b) Mobilize funding and technical assistance for the implementation of the African Information Society Initiative;

(c) Identify and suggest techniques for the application of geographical information for natural resource exploitation and management;

(d) Examine and advise on progress by member States in all aspects of statistical development;

(e) Advise on the establishment of arrangements for the improvement of all aspects of methodology and practice in the areas of statistics, information science and geographical information systems (remote sensing and cartography);

(f) Coordinate the training for African personnel in the areas of statistics, information science and geographical information systems.

3. Committee on Sustainable Development

The Committee on Sustainable Development shall have the following functions:

(a) Undertake periodic reviews of the implementation of regional and global programmes of action such as Agenda 21, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Habitat Agenda and the World Food Summit Plan of Action;

(b) Consider and make recommendations on a multidisciplinary approach to the implementation of the relevant programmes of action;

(c) Promote the formulation of policies and measures for environment protection, food security, improved human settlements and integration of population variables in development planning;

(d) Provide advice to the Commission in the formulation of activities for supporting member States in the interrelated areas of food security, population, environment and human settlements.

4. Committee on Human Development and Civil Society

The Committee on Human Development and Civil Society shall have the following functions:

(a) Assist member States in promoting measures to follow up the implementation of the regional and global programmes of action in social and human development and popular participation;

(b) Provide advice to the Commission in formulating its work programmes in the area of human development and popular participation;

(c) Encourage the integration of social and human dimensions into development policies, plans and programmes at both macroeconomic and sectoral levels;

(d) Identify and highlight the major economic and social development issues and concerns with a view to promoting policies and strategies for human development and popular participation in development.

5. Committee on Industry and Private Sector Development

The Committee on Industry and Private Sector Development shall have the following functions:

(a) Assist the Commission in the articulation of strategies and programmes for private sector development;

(b) Undertake periodic reviews and assessment of progress in implementing strategies for private sector development;

(c) Provide advice to the Commission on orienting its work programme to give support to member States in fostering private sector development;

(d) Provide a forum where representatives of government and the private sector can share experiences and exchange information on best practices relating to support policy measures for private sector development;

(e) Review and monitor progress in industrialization in Africa;

(f) Identify and recommend measures for accelerating the process of industrialization in the region:

(i) Provide advice and information that will enable the Commission to formulate strategies for subregional and/or regional industrial integration;

(ii) Provide the Commission with advice on how best to assist member States in facilitating industrial development, including their promotion of industrial restructuring programmes;

(g) Periodically assess progress made in the process of industrialization and in the implementation of integration strategies.

6. Committee on Natural Resources, Science and Technology

The Committee on Natural Resources, Science and Technology shall have the following functions:

(a) Promote measures to facilitate cooperation among African countries in the areas of natural resources, science and technology;

(b) Provide a forum for exchange of information and sharing experiences in these areas;

(c) Assist the Commission in the formulation of programmes for the development and application of science and technology;

(d) Advise the Commission on ways to strengthen its support to member States in the area of natural resources management.

7. Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration

The Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration shall have the following functions:

(a) Undertake periodic review and assessment of Africa's trading position in the world economy;

(b) Identify and highlight major opportunities and constraints in trade and investment for African countries;

(c) Enhance the African trade sector through the adoption of appropriate measures, policies and strategies for the expansion of regional and external trade;

(d) In close collaboration with the Organization of African Unity/African Economic Community, promote the implementation of measures designed to strengthen economic cooperation and integration among African countries;

(e) Assist African countries and their intergovernmental organizations in making more effective the policy instruments for economic cooperation and integration in Africa;

(f) In close collaboration with the Intergovernmental Committees of Experts of the Subregional Development Centres, assist the member States of the Subregional Development Centres and their intergovernmental organizations in

strengthening the existing institutional machinery for subregional economic cooperation and integration, as well as strengthening existing institutions for subregional trade cooperation, within the framework of the Abuja Treaty;

(g) Identify measures to coordinate and harmonize micro- and macroeconomic policy among African countries as a prerequisite for accelerating regional economic integration.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Programme of work and priorities of the Economic Commission for Africa for the biennium 1998-1999

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 41/203 of 11 December 1986 and subsequent relevant resolutions on programme planning,

Recalling further resolution 809 (XXXI) of 8 May 1996 of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa on new directions for the Commission, and endorsing, in particular, the new orientations of the Commission as outlined in the document entitled 'Serving Africa better: strategic directions for the Economic Commission for Africa',[6] as well as in the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001,

Taking note of the Commission's programme of work for 1997 as revised in compliance with paragraph 5 of resolution 809 (XXXI) of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa, in which the Executive Secretary was requested to revise, in close collaboration with the Bureau of the Commission, the 1996-1997 work programme,

Having examined the proposed programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1998-1999,[7]

Taking note of the new programme structure, which is characterized by congruence between organizational and programme structures, a reduction in the number of subprogrammes and the clustering of closely related activities under a single subprogramme to foster synergy and achieve greater efficiency and impact in the delivery of services,

Convinced that the proposals contained in the proposed programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1998-1999 will make a significant contribution to Africa's economic and social development,

1. Endorses the programme of work and priorities of the Commission for the biennium 1998-1999[7] as amended;

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[6] E/ECA/CM.22/2.

[7] E/ECA/CM.23/10.

2. Requests the Secretary-General, in making his proposals for the 1998-1999 programme budget, to give special consideration to the development needs of the African region by providing the Commission with adequate resources to enable it to carry out fully the reforms already embarked upon;

3. Calls upon the General Assembly and its Second and Fifth Committees to ensure that adequate resources are made available to the Commission for the implementation of the work programme of the Commission;

4. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to ensure that the implementation of the work programme is guided by the same principles that have underpinned reform and renewal at the Economic Commission for Africa: professional excellence, cost-effectiveness in product management and programme delivery, and effective partnerships with African regional organizations, the organizations of the United Nations system, and other multilateral and bilateral donors in support of Africa's development;

5. Commends the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa for the innovative approach it adopted in designing its work programme and the activities therein.

E. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

19. At its nineteenth session, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia approved nine draft resolutions for adoption by the Council.

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Programme of work and priorities of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the biennium 1996-1997

The Economic and Social Council,

Noting the progress made during the period from 1 January 1996 to 31 March 1997 in the implementation of the programme of work and priorities of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the biennium 1996-1997,

Noting also the changes made by the secretariat in the programme activities of the Commission and the reasons for those changes,

1. Approves said changes;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to present in 1998, in his comprehensive report to the member States on the progress made in the implementation of the Commission's programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1996-1997, any other changes effected in the programme of work and priorities.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Medium-term plan of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the period 1998-2001

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 51/219 of 18 December 1996 on programme planning, in which the Assembly adopted the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001,

Recalling also that the Assembly reaffirmed that the medium-term plan, as adopted, was the principal policy directive of the United Nations and should serve as a framework for the formulation of the biennial programme budgets,

Taking note of the medium-term plan of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the period 1998-2001,

1. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to take into account the guidelines contained in the report of the Technical Committee on the work of its tenth session, held at Beirut on 5 and 6 May 1997, and to include them in the revised medium-term plan in accordance with the applicable United Nations rules;

2. Also requests the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its twentieth session on any changes effected in the medium-term plan.

DRAFT RESOLUTION III

Programme of work and priorities of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the biennium 1998-1999

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 51/219 of 18 December 1996 on programme planning, in which the Assembly adopted the medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, and noting that the plan is a translation of legislative mandates into programmes and the embodiment of the general policy guidelines and objectives set out by the intergovernmental bodies and also constitutes the principal policy directive of the United Nations,

Noting with appreciation the draft programme of work and priorities of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the biennium 1998-1999,

Noting also that the draft programme of work and priorities of the Commission reflects the strategies and objectives of the medium-term plan,

1. Approves the draft programme of work and priorities of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the biennium 1998-1999, in accordance with the guidelines contained in the report of the Technical Committee of the Commission on the work of its tenth session, held at Beirut on 5 and 6 May 1997;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to report any changes effected in the programme of work and priorities to the Commission at its twentieth session.

DRAFT RESOLUTION IV

Change in the frequency of the sessions of the Committee on Water Resources of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

The Economic and Social Council,

Stressing the importance of resolution 205 (XVIII) of 25 May 1995 of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, by which the Commission established the Committee on Water Resources,

Conscious of the growing need for the development and conservation of water resources in the region of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling the recommendations made by the Committee on Water Resources at its 1st meeting, on 30 March 1997, at which it requested that its sessions be held on an annual rather than a biennial basis in view of the rapid developments taking place in the field of water resources,

Authorizes the Committee on Water Resources of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to hold its sessions annually rather than biennially.

DRAFT RESOLUTION V

Establishment of the Committee on Transport of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

The Economic and Social Council,

Aware of the vital role of transport infrastructures in national socio-economic development,

Also aware of the importance of integrating transport networks with a view to contributing to the acceleration of regional cooperation processes,

Conscious of the important role of the transport sector in facilitating the flow of goods and passengers among countries and regions, thus contributing to the liberalization of international trade, the promotion of tourism and the growth of exports, particularly within the context of the growing trend towards globalization,

Welcoming the steps taken by United Nations regional commissions for the establishment of specialized committees in various transport fields to ensure the coordination of work at the regional level,

1. Establishes the Committee on Transport of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which will be made up of representatives of the States members of the Commission that specialize in the field of transport and will undertake the following tasks:

(a) Participation in the establishment and formulation of priorities for programmes of work and medium-term plans in the field of transport;

(b) Monitoring of developments in the field of transport in the States members of the Commission;

(c) Monitoring of the progress achieved in the activities of the secretariat of the Commission in the field of transport;

(d) Following up international and regional conferences, ensuring the participation of member States in them and coordinating member States' efforts to implement resolutions and recommendations;

2. Also decides that, starting in 1999, the Committee on Transport will meet every two years;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to follow up the implementation of the present resolution and report thereon to the Commission at its twentieth session.

DRAFT RESOLUTION VI

Establishment of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region

The Economic and Social Council,

Aware that the steadily growing trend towards the liberalization of foreign trade and economic globalization, the conclusion of a series of multilateral trade agreements within the framework of the World Trade Organization and the emergence of a large number of economic blocs will transform the international trading system in the future,

Conscious of the growing interest of the States members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in the World Trade Organization and the desire of many of them to join it, and of the importance of defining the positions of the countries of the region and coordinating those positions with respect to the issues involved,

Taking into consideration the appreciation shown by member States for the efforts made by the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in this area, both alone and in cooperation with specialized international organizations,

Aware of the importance of defining the issues of concern to the States members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia within the new areas that will be discussed in future trade negotiations, such as trade and environment, trade and investment, and trade and competition, and the impact that those areas will have on the economic development of the countries of the region,

Welcoming the efforts made by numerous regional groups in conducting research and studies in those areas and coordinating their positions at the regional level,

1. Establishes the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the Countries of the ESCWA Region, which will be made up of representatives of the States members of the Commission that specialize in this field and will undertake the following tasks:

(a) Participation in the identification of the priorities and concerns of the States members of the Commission in the field of multilateral trade agreements and negotiations;

(b) Monitoring of international developments in world trade negotiations and the creation and development of economic and trade blocs, and coordination of the positions of the States members of the Commission with respect thereto;

(c) Cooperation with the secretariat of the Commission in establishing programmes to assist the countries of the region in outlining appropriate national and regional economic development policies to enable those countries to take greater advantage of the trends towards liberalization of foreign trade and economic globalization;

(d) Establishment of joint programmes with the countries of the region and in cooperation with other regional and international organizations for training, exchange of information and studies;

2. Also decides that the Committee will hold its sessions annually, beginning in 1998;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to follow up the implementation of the present resolution and report thereon to the Commission at its twentieth session.

DRAFT RESOLUTION VII

Progress made in facilitating the relocation of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to its permanent headquarters at Beirut

The Economic and Social Council,

Taking note of the note by the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the progress made in facilitating the relocation of the Commission to its permanent headquarters at Beirut,[8]

Taking into consideration the presentation made by the Executive Secretary of the Commission in that regard,

Noting the current preparations for the Commission's relocation to its permanent headquarters at Beirut and the resulting termination of the services of the local staff employed by the Commission in Amman,

Commending the local staff of the Commission in Amman for their excellent service,

1. Expresses its appreciation for the plans prepared and the measures adopted by the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, including the plan for the Commission's relocation to its permanent headquarters at Beirut in accordance with a timetable that will not interfere with the implementation of the programmes of the Commission and will take into consideration the needs of its staff;

2. Reiterates its gratitude to the Government of Lebanon for the efforts and the arrangements it has made to provide a headquarters that satisfies the needs and requirements of the United Nations;

3. Reiterates its thanks to the Government of Iraq for the facilities provided throughout the Commission's presence in Baghdad and its gratitude to the Government of Jordan for the facilities provided to the Commission during its stay in Amman;

4. Requests the authorities concerned within the United Nations Secretariat to examine the possibility of utilizing the skills of the local staff of the Commission in Amman in other areas within the United Nations or of finding ways to compensate them.

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[8] E/ESCWA/19/7.

DRAFT RESOLUTION VIII

Organizational and programme changes and modifications introduced by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia since 1994

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 45/264 of 13 May 1991, 46/235 of 13 April 1992, 48/162 of 20 December 1993 and 50/227 of 24 May 1996 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields,

Taking note of the new trends towards the reform and adaptation of the United Nations in accordance with current world developments,

Recalling resolution 191 (XVI) of 2 September 1992 of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields,

Taking note of the organizational and programme changes and modifications introduced by the Commission since 1994,[9]

Confirming that the priorities established in the light of recent developments correspond to the needs of States members of the Commission,

1. Expresses its appreciation of the organizational and programme changes made and the methods adopted by the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in carrying out its activities, which have made it possible to address development issues within an integrated perspective, enabled the entities concerned in the member States to make a greater contribution to the formulation of the Commission's programmes of work and to the follow-up of their implementation, and promoted greater coordination and integration with United Nations agencies and organizations as well as national and regional institutions concerned with regional development, cooperation and integration;

2. Calls for the enhancement of the Commission's function as a basic forum for coordinating the economic and social policies of its member States and for the development of its role in supporting regional and subregional projects aimed at expanding economic and social cooperation among member States at both the regional and subregional levels;

3. Also calls for the reinforcement of the role of the United Nations at the regional level, which entails the promotion of the role of the regional commissions in representing the regional dimension of global issues and in integrating United Nations activities at the international, regional and national levels;

4. Further calls for the granting to the Commission, within the framework of the reform of the United Nations system, of a broader mandate for carrying

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[9] See E/ESCWA/19/5.

out its activities, including those related to regional technical cooperation projects, and for the strengthening of its role in coordinating the activities of the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and those of the regional and national organizations concerned in the region in which it operates so as to ensure that the United Nations objectives of development, freedom and peace are achieved.

DRAFT RESOLUTION IX

Celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in 1999 and role of the Commission in the coming century

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 1818 (LV) of 9 August 1973, by which it established the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia for the purpose of consolidating development efforts in the region and promoting economic cooperation among the countries of the region,

Commending the Commission for the activities it has undertaken since its establishment in the various fields of economic and social development, thus supporting the development efforts of the States members of the Commission and promoting cooperation among them,

1. Decides that the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia should be celebrated during its twentieth session, to be held in 1999;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to take all measures that he deems necessary in this regard, including the preparation of the necessary studies for the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Commission;

3. Invites the Governments of the States members of the Commission to take this opportunity to formulate a new vision and define the role and tasks of the Commission in line with regional and world developments in the coming century;

4. Also invites the Governments of the member States to participate in this celebration at the highest level;

5. Invites the Secretary-General to take part in this event.

II. MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

A. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Resolution 53/2. Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

20. The Commission welcomed the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action by the Fourth World Conference on Women and urged member countries to ensure their implementation in coordination with the Jakarta Declaration and Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women in Asia and the Pacific. Cooperation among all levels of government and civil society, including non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations should be enhanced. Special emphasis should be placed on the priority needs and requirements of the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries, and the disadvantaged economies in transition in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action with assistance from funding agencies, donor countries and the private sector. The resolution requested the Executive Secretary to take measures to promote the eradication of poverty, provide increased access to capacity-building and social mobilization. The modality of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) should be further strengthened. It also called upon the Executive Secretary to convene a regional meeting of national machineries for the advancement of women on a biennial basis and to explore with the Government of Viet Nam the possibility for hosting the meeting in 1998. A regional conference on trafficking in women and children should also be convened, in cooperation with the relevant agencies of the United Nations system. The Executive Secretary was requested to report on the progress of implementation at the fifty-fourth session of the Commission.

Resolution 53/3. Framework for the North-East Subregional Programme of Environmental Cooperation

21. The Commission endorsed the Framework for the North-East Subregional Programme of Environmental Cooperation adopted by the Third Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in North-east Asia, held in 1996, and called upon all the participating parties to work closely towards practical institutional and financial arrangements for the programme. It requested the Executive Secretary to promote subregional environmental cooperation in North-east Asia, in collaboration with United Nations bodies and agencies, leading towards the realization of the Framework. The resolution also called upon the Executive Secretary and relevant United Nations bodies and agencies to continue to provide secretariat support on an interim basis, pending a final decision on the institutional arrangements for the Programme.

Resolution 53/4. Elimination of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in Asia and the Pacific

22. The Commission noted with concern the continued practices of prostitution and trafficking in children and youth, which were taking on an international

dimension with the advances in information technology (i.e. through the Internet). It took note of the findings from the preparatory work for the Stockholm World Congress that sexual exploitation of children and youth by tourists and others can in some cases be highly organized and extremely profitable while carrying only low risks of prosecution and punishment. The difficulties in obtaining accurate data on such illegal practices, especially on those for commercial purposes, and on the danger such practices posed in contracting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, were fully recognized. The resolution called upon member countries to combat those practices in their respective countries and tourist destinations and to suggest areas for the promotion of technical cooperation programmes. Appropriate programmes should be implemented to protect the legitimate rights of children and youth in accordance with international standards and agreements. The resolution called for donor countries/agencies to fund projects seeking to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse of youth and children and to assist young victims of such exploitation. It requested the Executive Secretary (a) to compile an inventory of data on the extent of commercial sexual exploitation and on the social services available to them; (b) to sensitize and promote awareness of the issues and of the access to social services and opportunities for employment; (c) to enhance the capabilities of social service and health personnel, through relevant gender-sensitive training, in assisting young victims and potential victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in being reintegrated into society; and (d) to coordinate with other United Nations bodies and agencies in combating sexual exploitation in a more integrated and cohesive manner so that unnecessary overlapping and duplication of work could be avoided. Progress in the implementation of the resolution would be reported to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session.

Implementation of the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific

23. The Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific, 1985-1994 was proclaimed by the General Assembly in resolution 39/227 of 18 December 1984, and adopted by the Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Transport and Communications in 1985. A mid-term review of the Decade, undertaken in 1989-1990, assessed the impact of phase I, identified crucial short- and long-term transport and communications problems, and determined priorities for phase II of the Decade. Through its resolution 1991/75, the Economic and Social Council recommended that the General Assembly change the period of the second quinquennium of the Decade to 1992-1996, and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Council, a report on the implementation of the resolution every two years until the end of the Decade. The time-frame of phase II of the Decade was therefore readjusted by the General Assembly in its decision 46/453 of 20 December 1991, to cover the period 1992-1996.

24. The Transport and Communications Decade came to an end on 31 December 1996. As mandated by ESCAP resolution 47/10 of 10 April 1991, an evaluation of the Decade was carried out in December 1996 and January 1997 by the ESCAP secretariat in close cooperation with the implementing agencies and recipient countries, and a detailed evaluation report was published in April 1997 (ST/ESCAP/1749). Based on the findings and recommendations of the 1997

evaluation, document E/ESCAP/1059 was prepared and submitted to the Commission for consideration at its fifty-third session.

25. The Commission at its fifty-third session noted with appreciation the significant achievements made through the implementation of the regional action programme during the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific, 1985-1996, with the active participation of member countries. In that regard, it also recognized the important contributions made by the donors and implementing agencies.

26. The Commission expressed satisfaction with the evaluation of the Decade undertaken by the secretariat and endorsed the recommendations contained in document E/ESCAP/1059, including those designed to assist in the effective implementation of the New Delhi Action Plan on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific. It strongly urged the secretariat to keep in view, during the implementation of the New Delhi Action Plan, the lessons learned from the implementation of the Transport and Communications Decade.

27. The Commission recognized the effective inter-agency cooperation in the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for the Decade, and reiterated its support for the continuation of inter-agency cooperation and coordination through the Subcommittee on Infrastructure Development of the Regional Inter-agency Committee for Asia and the Pacific (RICAP) for the implementation of the New Delhi Action Plan.

28. The Commission expressed concern over the reduced level of financial support for the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for the Decade, and urged the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), other international organizations and agencies and all countries to support actively and give high priority to the New Delhi Action Plan in their assistance programmes.

B. Economic Commission for Africa

827 (XXXII). Rationalization and harmonization of ECA-sponsored institutions

29. By its resolution 827 (XXXII), the Conference of Ministers of ECA endorsed the recommendations contained in document E/ECA/CM/23/5 on the rationalization and harmonization of the ECA-sponsored institutions. It called upon the governing bodies of the institutions whose survival was extremely doubtful, due to lack of support, to initiate, in consultation with the relevant host Governments, immediate measures towards the closure of their institutions. It also requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to identify, on the basis of agreed criteria, those institutions with which the Commission would develop close partnership programmes for enhanced synergy, and to seek alliances with the Commission's cooperating partners to support further efforts by member States to transform those institutions into regional centres of excellence.

828 (XXXII). Multinational Programming and Operational Centres: Strengthening the Economic Commission for Africa's subregional presence

30. As a follow-up to its resolution 810 (XXXI) of 8 May 1996 on the strengthening of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs), the Conference of Ministers of ECA examined document E/ECA/CM.23/6, which contained proposals and recommendations covering all relevant aspects of the MULPOC operations, including their mandate, geographical coverage, membership, location of headquarters and institutional policy-making framework. It renamed the MULPOCs "Subregional Development Centres (SRDCs)" and redefined their functions. It also decided that the distribution and membership of the Subregional Development Centres should be as follows:

(i) North African Subregional Development Centre. Headquarters: Tangiers, Morocco. Membership: Algeria, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia;

(ii) West African Subregional Development Centre. Headquarters: Niamey, Niger. Membership: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo;

(iii) Central African Subregional Development Centre. Headquarters: Yaoundé, Cameroon. Membership: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe;

(iv) Southern African Subregional Development Centre. Headquarters: Lusaka, Zambia. Membership: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe;

(v) Eastern African Subregional Development Centre. Headquarters: Kigali, Rwanda. Membership: Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania.

31. The Conference of Ministers appealed to the host countries of the various Subregional Development Centres to provide necessary facilities and support, including office accommodation, to reflect the enhanced presence of the Economic Commission for Africa in the subregions.

829 (XXXII). Follow-up to the Kampala Action Plan on Peace and Development and the African Platform for Action: creation of the African Women Committee on Peace

32. By this resolution, the Conference of Ministers of ECA took note with satisfaction of the recommendations of the Women Leadership Forum on Peace held at Johannesburg in November 1996 at the initiative of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization of African Unity. Conscious of the fact that women were virtually absent at the level of decision-making in matters of war

and peace, it endorsed the creation of the African Women Committee on Peace, which will work closely with the Organization of African Unity central organ in an advisory capacity in matters related to the peace process. It called upon the Economic Commission for Africa to collaborate with the Organization of African Unity in providing a joint secretariat for the African Women Committee on Peace and to assist the Committee in establishing its own secretariat as soon as possible. It also requested the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to submit the resolution to the Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity at its forthcoming summit meeting for endorsement.

Declaration on Accelerating Trade and Investment in Africa

33. At the conclusion of the thirty-second session of the Commission, the Conference of Ministers adopted the Declaration on Accelerating Trade and Investment in Africa.

34. In the Declaration, the Conference endorsed the resolutions and declaration adopted by the Conference of African Ministers of Finance at its sixth session (31 March-2 April 1997). It took stock of Africa's position within the emerging global economic system at the threshold of the twenty-first century and reaffirmed that the African countries had the primary responsibility for restructuring their economies to meet the challenges and opportunities of a globalizing and liberalizing world economy.

35. The Conference of Ministers of ECA was convinced that trade and investment were essential components in any credible strategies to accelerate development in the countries of Africa and sustain high rates of economic growth, and that poverty, which constituted the most serious problem facing African society, could be reduced and eventually eradicated by sustained high rates of economic growth that was broad-based and geared to creating employment and generating rising incomes.

36. The Conference welcomed the debt reduction initiative for the highly indebted poor countries recently proposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and hoped that it would be reinforced by additional bilateral and multilateral measures to substantially reduce the debt stock of all African countries. It invited transnational corporations to play their rightful role in securing the flow of foreign direct investment while respecting the principles adopted by African countries.

37. The Conference recognized that, in order to boost domestic savings and investment, attract substantial private foreign capital transfer and expand trade with the rest of the world, African countries must accomplish at least the following:

(a) Promote a positive image of Africa as a safe place for business and investment;

(b) Maintain peace, security, political stability and good governance;

(c) Establish an adequate legal and regulatory framework;

(d) Strengthen the institutional capacities of African countries;

(e) Improve the information flow on economic developments in Africa;

(f) Modernize, expand and diversify production;

(g) Reduce the cost of establishing a business and doing business;

(h) Strengthen international competitiveness to improve participation in the multilateral trading system;

(i) Strive for genuine regional economic integration.

38. Domestic and foreign investors were invited to take advantage of the opportunities created by the improved policy and economic environment in Africa. Africa's bilateral partners were urged to continue to provide direct financial support and extend indirect support through tax incentives to their national investors participating in infrastructure development projects in Africa. The Conference of Ministers requested the ECA secretariat to identify issues crucial to accelerating trade and investment and to come up with appropriate strategies, in collaboration with African Governments and leading African and global multilateral institutions. ECA should also function as the clearing house for gathering and disseminating experiences and best practices from within Africa as well as from other regions.